

FINLAND the HERMIT NATION of EUROPE

People Are Passive and Unfathomable Yet Their Love of Independence Promises Bright Future

IN 1810 Emperor Alexander I of Russia wrote to Steinheit, then governor general of Finland, in the following terms: "As regards the conditions of Finland, my intention has been to give this people a political existence, so that they may not feel themselves conquered by Russia, but united to her for their own clear advantage; therefore not only their civil but their political laws must be maintained." Today, a century after those words were written, there seems at last good hope that Alexander's intention may be permanently fulfilled, writes Rosalind Travers Hyndman in New York Sun.

A race of Mongolian origin and language, the "Suomalaiset" or people of the fens—were Christianized very early in the thirteenth century by the Swedes, who treated them on the whole with equality and justice, and intermarried with them freely, not, however, allowing the Finnish language to be written or spoken to any extent. The result was that in 1808 Russia conquered a people who spoke Swedish and regarded themselves as independent Swedes; and although the Finns have passed through enormous national changes in the course of the century, Russians of the ruling classes could never get it out of their heads that Finland desired to belong to Sweden again.

The governors of Russia, having much vaster affairs in hand, did not realize that the remarkable development of Finnish nationalism was directed, first and last, against the Swedish language and Finno-Swedish domination. The Finnish language was spoken only by the remote peasantry and Finnish names even were not legally recognized. Yet, meanwhile, a great movement was steadily growing up for the revival of Finland's own singularly rich and beautiful tongue.

The Finnish people began to think of their country as "Suomi," something utterly distinct from Sweden or Russia, having a language and literature of its own. From 1849 onward, when Lourentz published the second edition of the "Kalevala," Finland's national epic, educated Finns were beginning to give up Swedish as a means of communication and learning to use the strange, difficult, sonorous language which was their birth-right.

Naturally this development soon cleft the country in two. Many Finns urged, not unreasonably, that it was hardly practicable for so small a people to cut themselves off from Scandinavia, from Russia, from the rest of Europe in fact, "by climbing on to a language island" in this way. But nationalism triumphed. In 1863 the "nice little constitution" granted by Alexander II left the Finns free to govern themselves in all internal matters in a fairly representative manner, and from this time the study of Finnish became an integral part of the general education.

The use of the revived language of Finland grew so fast that Swedish-speaking Finns began to find themselves in a minority, and in 1894 after a very hot debate the Finnish language was placed on an equality with Swedish in the Finnish senate. "Svekomani" (Swede-Finn) and "Fennoman" (Finnish-Finn) became cries of warfare, and the language conflict fell roughly into line with the divisions of class. The progressive and proletarian elements in the country were Fennoman, while the middle class, conservative and aristocratic forces were for a long while by speech and traditions Swede.

All this time the Finns as a people and as a nation kept strictly to that policy of detachment and independence which has always marked them. They took no part at all in Russian affairs and showed little interest in those of Scandinavia; they appeared to Europe generally as self-contained as a Chinese colony in the West might be.

Finland meant to work out her salvation alone. In literature and art indeed the country was open to European influences, for the Finns have always been great travelers, wandering about the continent with cold, appraising eyes, selecting and taking back with them such ideas as they considered likely to be of use. They took political ideas also from Scandinavia and from Germany, but they had no desire to make propaganda for their own ideas or their own race.

Yet inevitably they were bound to be a growing trouble to the Russian government and a stumbling block to Pan-Slav policy. Obviously a democratic and almost self-governing province was out of place among the folds of the vast autocratic rule which covered all the Russians then.

But a far more important objection was this: The duchy of Finland, alien in language, character and administration, was a complete break in that scheme of one vast homogeneous Russia, stretching from the Norwegian coast to the Pacific, one in language, laws, religion and government—that dream of giant unity and monotony which seems to have filled the minds of the directors of Russia for 20 years and more. There seems little doubt that the deposed dynasty cherished this design as the Hohenzollerns did that of "Mitteleuropa." It was a similar huge, dull, magnificent, miscellaneous idea, trampling even more widely over the rights of other nations and intended to produce an even more dismal uniformity of rule.

So, disapprobation viewed—and the Finn, even when considering his own misfortunes, is eminently disapprobation—Russia's first attack upon the liberties of Finland in 1809 was inevitable, a catastrophe of nature. There is little need to recall "the bad years" from 1809 to 1904, when the Finnish constitution was suspended and the country was placed under the rule of a military dictator, General Bobrikoff. They form a monotonous record of press censorship, dismissals of native officials, illegal arrests and exile.

The great strike of 1905-1906, however unsuccessful in its main objects, achieved two things:



THE MARKET SQUARE OF HELSINKI

The election of the Russian duma and the temporary restoration of Finland's constitution. Yet "restored" is hardly the word, for that restricted, cautious and eminently bourgeois constitution of 1809 was resurrected into something democratic and terrible—a popular government, based upon full adult suffrage and proportional representation with an elected house, containing at its first assemblage in April, 1907, 80 social democrats out of a total of 200. And these were genuine, uncompromising Marxist social democrats, the outcome of a party which was first formed in 1899. Since then the social democratic representation of Finland has steadily increased at every election.

From the spring of 1907 to that of 1909 Finland experienced "two crowded years of glorious life" in which the country simply hummed with internal progress and political development. The old feuds of Svekomani and Fennoman were taken up with renewed vigor, although the Swedish speaking Finns were now only one-ninth of the population and still decreasing.

We all remember how, in May, 1910, 120 members of the British parliament signed a memorial to the duma expressing the apprehension with which they regarded the proposal to deprive Finland of her constitutional rights, while a large number of German, French, Italian, Belgian and Dutch deputies formed and addressed similar memorials. But all this was in vain, and by July, 1910, the bill for the Russification of Finland became law.

It was not immediately and violently put into practice. The landtag was still assembled at intervals, though it had rather less power than a municipal council. A number of official dismissals took place, Russians were given full Finnish rights in Finland and the usual series of arrests, imprisonments and exiles followed, but until 1912 the Finnish press was only intermittently censored. However, this second series of "bad years" was much harder for the Finns than the period of 1899-1906.

Soon after the war began Finland was practically cut off from the civilized world. Russification set in with full force and the most stringent censorship of the press, of correspondence and of all written matter whatever was established. Even the internal business of the country suffered greatly, and the whole people were put "under hatches," as it were, and assuredly on very short rations for an unlimited time.

One piece of news only came through in the early days of the war, to the effect that the dowager empress of Russia had returned from Denmark by way of Finland and had shown much courtesy and common sense on her passage. It was said that she had caused her personal guard to be greatly relaxed, that she had talked with Finns everywhere and had taken pains to create a good impression. But shortly after her return the Finns were specially and officially warned "not to build any false hopes of restored liberty" upon

the friendly demeanor of the dowager empress.

Naturally this ill-advised policy has had very bad results. At the beginning of the war many Finns were in favor of the allies, chiefly by reason of their English trade connections and English sympathies. But when Russia's most powerful and necessary ally forbade to say one word in favor of a reasonable treatment of Finland, and when the English press by its indiscriminate praise of all things Russian actually gave more strength to the powers of reaction, then the Finns cannot be blamed for looking elsewhere.

Their exiles flocked to Germany in great numbers, and it is said that more than 3,000 Finns took up their residence there. The Germans are further credited with making active propaganda for their cause among the professors and students of Finland, but it seems doubtful whether they would really have found it worth while, when the allies themselves were unconsciously doing so much to spread pro-German sympathies there. If—but no one can say more than if—Finland was occasionally used as a channel for communication between Germany and the traitorous party in Russia the allies have only themselves to blame.

However this may be, it seems pretty clear that there were several German agencies in more than one part of Finland trying to stir the people up to an armed revolt.

Since our reactionary press at one time took upon itself to repeat the venerable and discredited clichés about Finland's desire for independence or for union with Sweden, it is well to say once more that Finland's great nationalist movement was all directed against Swedish influence, and that there are not five wisecracks in the whole country who would dream of the possibility of such a union. Nor has the fiercest advocate of Finnish freedom ever contemplated absolute independence. The position of the country and its very small population wholly forbid it.

Surely this tiny nation has a magnificent future! It may even be possible for them, highly trained and politically qualified as they are, to hurry through the intervening stages of their economic development and show to Europe the working model of a co-operative commonwealth. They are in the main Mongolians, patient, passive, secret and unfathomable, and their kinsmen in Japan and China have done equally marvelous things.

Yet alien from us as they are racially, their development is so western that no Englishman who has spent much time in Finland has any sense of a race barrier. On the contrary, they seem, once known, curiously appealing and sympathetic, this brave, ugly little people, with their high cheekbones, great foreheads and deepest eyes.

Their literature, like their landscape, is extraordinarily varied and beautiful and there runs through it a sense of the timeless forests and the unbounded North. It haunts you; no one who has felt the charm of Finland is really content till he sees the Land of Thousand Lakes again.

PAPER FAMINE IN OLD TIMES.

There was a paper famine in Europe in the seventh century. In A. D. 640 the Saracens conquered Egypt, and at the same time, by order of Omar, their caliph, the renowned library at Alexandria, consisting of 400,000 volumes, was burned. The paper supply of the then world was derived from the papyrus bark, a reed which grew only in Egypt. Consequently, when the Saracens gained possession of the country the paper supply was cut off. This led to the adoption of a curious expedient. The writing on used papyrus paper was erased, and the paper, which was thus made available, again brought into use. An old author has suggested that probably owing to this many valuable contributions from classic writers, Tacitus, Livy and others, were lost to the world.

FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENT.

The Coldstream Guards is a regiment of foot-guards in the British army forming part of the royal household brigade. It is one of the oldest regiments of the British service, dating from 1659. In that year General Monk, who, after the death of Cromwell, took sides with the parliament and the army, organized the regiment at Coldstream, a border town of Berwickshire, Scotland, whence the name of the regiment, and marched with it into England. It has seen service in every British campaign of any magnitude, and has emblazoned on its regimental colors the names of many of the most brilliant victories of British arms.

SLOW PROGRESS.

"You have been trying to deceive me for years, Henry."
"Oh, come now, my dear."
"It is said practice makes perfect."
"What has that to do with me?"
"I was just thinking that you don't succeed any better now than you did when we were first married."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

ICE AS A SWEETMEAT.

We Americans eat more ice cream and similar frozen desserts than the people of any other nation, but the Japanese have us beaten as eaters of ice. According to the Tokyo Advertiser, one of their favorite dishes is small cakes of ice broken into tiny pebbly pieces and eaten with sugar and lemon, or any other mixture that they may fancy. The commonest way of eating ice in Japan, however, is to shave it into snowy flakes and to swallow it with sweetened water into which various appetizers, such as fruit juice or sweetmeats, have been thrown.

Ice cream, milk and eggs shaken with ice and other kinds of cooling beverages are sold in an ever-increasing quantity, but the old style of eating "raw" ice, in what the Japanese call the kōrimizu fashion, is still in the greatest vogue.—Youth's Companion.

TATTOOING ANCIENT CUSTOM.

The antiquity of tattooing is evidenced by its almost universal employment among primitive peoples. In New Guinea the young women are tattooed all over their bodies, their faces being similarly treated after marriage.

In the Solomon Islands a girl is not eligible for marriage unless she has been tattooed. The girls of Borneo are thus adorned from waist to knees in most elaborate fashion; likewise their hands, feet and ankles.

In Baruch, under the last king, every male was required by royal edict to be tattooed from waist to knees; and it was customary for the girls to have their tongues tattooed with charms to attract the men.

SUCH AN INQUISITIVE WOMAN.

Hub—Who is that letter from?
Wife—What do you want to know for?
Hub—There you go! "What do I want to know for?" I declare if you aren't the most inquisitive woman I ever met.—Boston Transcript.

Winter Coats Make Impressive Exit



Winter styles in coats must soon make their exit in order to give the center of the stage to evening wraps and to coats for spring. But they are not going to slip away unhonored and unused; they will pass out amid hearty applause. The last efforts of designers are as interesting and noteworthy as those that ushered in the season, and just as our minds were made up to expect nothing new along came such examples of fine artistry as appears in the two coats pictured above. They are unsurpassed for beauty and smart style.

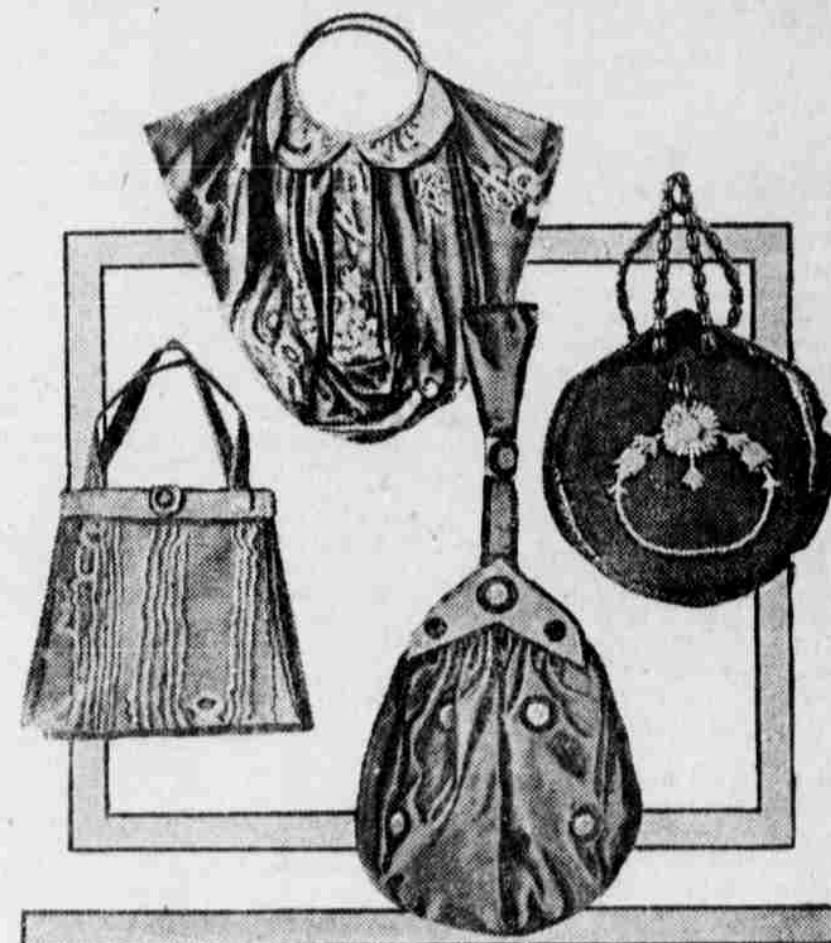
The victory of the allies and the end of the war was the signal for the revival of evening wraps. They will come in for much consideration, and already splendid garments reflect the mood of the public, which has denied itself the luxurious wraps of pre-war times. Following these, the first showing in coats for spring will compel the attention of everyone. In the meantime whoever is not already outfitted in a coat may take advantage of the impressive last models for winter.

The coat shown at the left of the

picture is a dressy garment of panne velvet or silk velours apparently. It is paneled at the back and at the front and adjusted into semi-fitting lines by means of a narrow plain sash that is looped over at the front, having rather long ends. Large, handsome crocheted-covered buttons are set in the girdle at each side of the back. Deep set-in pockets at the sides are finished at the top with a band of the material edged with a piping. This coat is a dark taupe color with cape collar and deep cuffs of taupe fox fur. It is as rich looking as a coat of moleskin, having much the same appearance.

The coat at the right is of very heavy wool velours and is a marvel of ingenious cutting. The shaped side bodies are extended with wide hanging panels ornamented with narrow tucks and a border of sealskin. Small slit pockets finished with arrow heads are set in the panels. The graceful cape, which is convertible into a high muffer collar, is of sealskin. Both coats are shoe-top length. A favorite color for heavy wool velours coats is a deep and soft plum shade with which sealskin looks unusually well.

Bags Are Indispensable



All sorts of bags for all sorts of purposes have become indispensable in the outfitting of women and their homes. Merely a list of the different kinds would make a long story, and as each particular kind appears in a variety of shapes and materials there is no end of interesting things to be said about bags. But the most important of all are those that women carry about with them for shopping or any other of their usual pursuits. Mary's little lamb has nothing on these bags; wherever women go, they go also, and one good-sized bag usually houses several smaller ones. An ordinary shopping bag is depended on to carry smaller bags, contain face powder and other first-aids to damaged complexions, purse, handkerchiefs, and many other things.

If one were to follow up the sources of materials and designs in shopping and work bags it would lead to a journey around the world. Dainty and exquisite bags for daytime and evening wear in many odd shapes proclaim themselves from France. Among them are numberless beaded designs. Japan is written plainly in fabric and beaded bags, also, and many a rich brocade, with golden dragons, hails from China.

The four bags pictured above are

among the most practical and handsome of a recent display on Fifth avenue. The bag at the top of the group is made of heavy brocade ribbon, cut with scallops at the top that are turned down, revealing a lining of plain satin.

A quiet shopping bag of navy blue moire appears at the left, finished with a loop and clasp of the material. The bag at the right is an odd round model which may be successfully made of ribbon or chiffon velvet. It has a handsome metal mounting at the top, such as may be bought in dry goods stores. The handles are a novelty in this particular, being made of large wood beads.

A rich dotted ribbon, showing a solid center of black with a ring of white embroidered on a brilliantly colored ground, makes a bag of great distinction, shown at the bottom of the group. The loop handle slips through a narrow strap of the ribbon.

Julia Bottomley

Odd Sash.

Of deer-brown chiffon velvet. Underside panels which end in heavier pockets. Cut to slope across hip line as flat extension from panels.